

top ten ways to annoy a gifted child

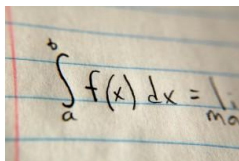
musings from the gifted guru at giftedguru.com



Do you see this boy with the peace sign? It's a ruse. As a teacher or parent of a gifted child, you will have no peace if you do any of the following things guaranteed to annoy a gifted child. Intrigued? Follow our ten-step plan guaranteed to annoy every gifted child you know or your money back!



1. Force them to remain at the "right" grade level. Surely the arbitrary grade/chronological age partnership sprang fully formed from the head of Zeus and must be adhered to at all costs. No "skipping" allowed! We frown on skipping! That's like cutting in line. It's cheating.



2. Insist that they show their work, even though every single answer is correct and they have known how to do that type of problem for three years. Show your work! How else will we find points to deduct?

3. Make them read along with much slower readers. Think nails on a chalkboard. The Supreme Court has ruled this to be cruel and unusual punishment. Well, perhaps not unusual, but definitely cruel. To fully understand what this is like for a gifted kid, find a cassette tape and play it at half speed. Then ask yourself questions about what you heard. Right after you pull the hot poker out of your eye.



4. Place them in a classroom with more typical learners and don't do anything to accommodate the giftedness. If they finish early every single day with every single assignment, so much the better! Hey, that's what books are for! As Marie Antoinette said, "Let them read books!" Or words to that effect. Bonus points for making them stop reading right at the best part. Double word score for having them "tutor" more typical learners, thus increasing the chances they are both bored *and* frustrated.



5. Say, "You're so smart, you should be able to do this." This is the best way to get a gifted kid to shut down like a check-out line at Wal-mart on Christmas Eve. Also useful: "So you think you're so smart..."

6. Refuse to allow them to play with older or younger kids. It's just not healthy. They need to get along with their age-group peers to prepare them for life in the real world. I mean, all of your friends are your same exact chronological age, right? Also, extra points for forcing them to be social and not allowing alone time.

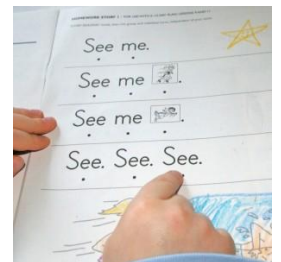
7. When the unit on wolves is over, there will be no more learning about wolves (or hurricanes, or the quadratic formula, or quantum physics). The unit is over! We are moving on! You are still interested, you say? You'd like to delve deeper? Too bad! Time marches on, and the state-mandated test date approaches. No time for interest-driven learning for the sake of learning! Silly...

8. More-ferentiate! This is Differentiation's evil imposter. With more-ferentiation, you just give more of the same work, not different work. See how that works? Genius! They're too busy to complain about being done, and if they refuse to do the work, you can say that it's a discipline problem and send them to the office! Plus, you don't have to do anything. You can just use old worksheets you've had for sixty years that you copied on a mimeograph. What a fantastic strategy!



9. Expect them to "act gifted" all of the time. Gifted kids should always get 100's on every assignment, always get everything the first time it's explained, always turn in their work on time, and essentially be the Mary Poppins of school (practically perfect in every way). If they don't measure up to this standard, they're probably not gifted and should be moved to the "regular" class.

10. Make them practice work they already know over and over. It's good for them. It's like the educational equivalent of the movie "Groundhog Day." The more they rebel, the more you should give them. It prepares them for the real world. You know, how your boss would love it if you came in and did the very same work over and over again and never made any progress. Oh, wait. Okay, so maybe it's not like the real world, but it is like the alternative universe we call "Educating the Gifted Child." Or Not.



So now you know them. The ten things guaranteed to make an insta-enemy out of even the sweetest child. How many will YOU try?